

Enough is enough



GUIDANCE FOR ACTIVISTS: QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS & NON-MEMBERS

Why are we being balloted for strike action?

Every year, unions representing local government workers submit a pay claim and employers respond with a pay offer. This year's offer was for 1.75% (or 2.75% for those on the lowest pay point). With inflation running at over 3%, this would represent a real terms pay cut. This offer was rejected by UNISON members in councils and schools, yet employers have refused to offer more.

Do I get a vote?

If you're a UNISON member working in a council or eligible school in England,

Wales and Northern Ireland then yes! If you receive a ballot paper from UNISON, we believe you are eligible to vote and eligible to take strike action.

Can non-members vote in the ballot?

The ballot is only open to UNISON members – but if you join now (before 3 January) then you can still vote in the ballot. UNISON is a recognised union for bargaining on pay on your behalf. If you want to have say in how your pay is determined, then join UNISON and vote in the ballot. It takes 5 mins to join at join.unison.org.uk

What's the point of striking? Will it make a difference?

A strike is a last resort and it's not an action that we take lightly. We continue to try and negotiate with local government employers. After announcing plans for a strike ballot, UNISON and other unions have continued speaking and meeting with employers. But at every opportunity they have refused to budge. Even knowing that we are balloting for strike action they insist 1.75% is their final offer. This leaves us with little choice but to ballot for a strike.

If we strike will I lose a day's pay?

This strike is about pay – but far more than just one day's worth of pay. This strike is about getting a better rate of pay for the whole year. If we can bring employers back to the negotiating table we stand a much better chance of getting an improved offer – beyond the 1.75% that is already well below the current forecast rate of inflation for this year (3.8%).

If we strike I'll still have to catch up on the work I missed

If your work isn't being done on the day of strike that's your employers' problem – not yours. It is their responsibility to manage workloads and deal with lack of staff on the day of the strike and afterwards. Striking is also a show of solidarity between workers – the more staff participate in a strike, the stronger

message it sends to employers. That's why it's important to get as many staff agreeing to strike action as possible.

How will a strike work if we are all working at home anyway?

Regardless of whether you work in an office or at home, you will be able to withdraw your labour and 'down tools' on the day of a strike. This includes things like answering phone calls or checking emails. This will impact the employer's ability to provide services and gives us the best chance of bringing the employer back to the negotiating table. We would also be encouraging those on strike to join other campaign events on the day.